

**IDENTIFYING TRAINING NEEDS AND CLIENT SATISFACTION OF  
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH  
PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, OR MULTIPLE DISABILITIES IN KUWAIT**

**by**

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**MENGENAL PASTI KEPERLUAN LATIHAN DAN KEPUASAN PELANGGAN  
PERKHIDMATAN PEMULIHAN VOKASIONAL MURID BERMASALAH  
FIZIKAL, INTELEK, ATAU BERMASALAH PELBAGAI DI KUWAIT**

**oleh**

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**Tesis yang diserahkan untuk  
memenuhi keperluan bagi  
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# **MENGENAL PASTI KEPERLUAN LATIHAN DAN KEPUASAN PELANGGAN PERKHIDMATAN PEMULIHAN VOKASIONAL MURID BERMASALAH FIZIKAL, INTELEK, ATAU BERMASALAH PELBAGAI DI KUWAIT**

## **ABSTRAK**

Keperluan latihan dan kepuasan pelanggan adalah dua kebimbangan utama dalam pemulihan vokasional tetapi belum ditangani di Kuwait. Objektif yang berkaitan dengan keperluan latihan adalah untuk menentukan ciri-ciri psikometrik inventori keperluan latihan untuk konteks Kuwait, membanding dan mengenal pasti keperluan latihan berdasarkan ciri-ciri demografi yang berbeza, dan mengenal pasti pengetahuan domain kaunseling dengan keperluan latihan tertinggi. Objektif yang berkaitan dengan kepuasan pelanggan adalah untuk menentukan ciri-ciri psikometrik soal selidik kepuasan pelanggan bagi konteks Kuwait, membanding dan mengenal pasti kepuasan pelanggan berdasarkan demografi ciri-ciri yang berbeza, mengenal pasti dimensi kepuasan pelanggan yang mempunyai kepuasan terendah, serta membandingkan kepuasan ibu bapa dengan kepuasan murid perkhidmatan pemulihan vokasional. Metodologi kajian tinjauan menggunakan reka bentuk penyelidikan berurutan QUAN-Qual. Sampel kajian ini terdiri daripada staf yang memberi perkhidmatan (764), murid (484), serta ibu bapa (1170) di sekolah-sekolah pemulihan vokasional di Kuwait. Hasil kajian yang berkaitan dengan keperluan latihan menunjukkan kebolehpercayaan ketekalan dalaman yang tinggi untuk inventori. Enam faktor yang berbeza telah diekstrak. Didapati tahun pengalaman, kategori pekerjaan, dan kelayakan meramalkan skor keperluan latihan. Perbezaan yang signifikan dalam keperluan latihan telah diperoleh berdasarkan umur, pengalaman, kelayakan, dan kategori pekerjaan. Kesemua domain pengetahuan didapati memerlukan latihan. Terdapat juga perbezaan yang signifikan dalam keperluan latihan

domain pengetahuan mengikut umur, pengalaman, kelayakan, jenis pekerjaan dan jenis sekolah. Instrumen kajian kepuasan klien menunjukkan kebolehpercayaan ketekalan dalaman yang tinggi bagi Soal Selidik Kepuasan Murid (Student Satisfaction Survey) dan Soal Selidik Kepuasan Ibu Bapa (Parent Satisfaction Survey). Tiga faktor utama bagi kepuasan pelajar dan ibu bapa telah diekstrak. Kategori jenis sekolah dapat meramal skor kepuasan pelajar, manakala jantina ibu bapa, jantina pelajar, jenis sekolah, dan kategori kurang upaya adalah peramal kepada skor kepuasan ibu bapa. Terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan bagi kepuasan pelajar berdasarkan jantina, umur, jenis sekolah, dan kategori kurang upaya. Manakala terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan bagi kepuasan ibu bapa dari segi jantina ibu bapa, jantina pelajar, kelayakan, jenis sekolah, dan kategori kurang upaya. Perbezaan yang signifikan bagi kepuasan pelajar yang terendah diperoleh untuk jenis sekolah. Terdapat juga perbezaan yang signifikan bagi kepuasan ibu bapa dari segi jantina pelajar dan jenis sekolah. Akhir sekali, didapati tiada perbezaan yang signifikan bagi tahap kepuasan antara klien (ibu bapa dan pelajar).

# **IDENTIFYING TRAINING NEEDS AND CLIENT SATISFACTION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES OF STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, OR MULTIPLE DISABILITIES IN KUWAIT**

## **ABSTRACT**

Training needs and client satisfaction are two of the major concerns in vocational rehabilitation but has not yet been adequately addressed in Kuwait. The objectives related to training needs are to determine the psychometric characteristics of an adapted training needs inventory for the Kuwait context, explore demographic characteristics, compare and identify the training needs across different demographic characteristics, and identify the knowledge domains with the highest training need. The objectives related to client satisfaction are to determine the psychometric characteristics of a developed client satisfaction survey for the Kuwait context, explore demographic characteristics, compare client satisfaction and identify the client satisfaction across different demographic characteristics, identify the client satisfaction dimension that has the lowest satisfaction, and compare parent satisfaction and student satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services. A survey methodology with sequential explanatory QUAN-qual research design was used. The samples of this study consisted of service providers (764), student (484), and parents (1170) in vocational rehabilitation schools in Kuwait. The results related to training needs revealed high internal consistency reliability for the inventory. Six distinct factors were extracted. Years of experience, job title category, and qualification predict training needs scores. Significant differences in training needs were obtained across age, experience, qualification, and job title. All knowledge domains require training, and significant differences in knowledge domains training needs were obtained across age, experience, qualification, job title and type of

school. The results related to client satisfaction revealed high internal consistency reliability for the Student Satisfaction Survey and Parent Satisfaction Survey. Three main factors for both student satisfaction and parent satisfaction were extracted. The type of school category predicts student satisfaction scores, whilst parent gender, student gender, type of school, and category of disability predict parent satisfaction scores. Significant differences in student satisfaction were obtained across gender, age, type of school, and category of disability. Significant differences in parent satisfaction were obtained across parent gender, student gender, qualification, type of school, and category of disability. Significant differences in the lowest student satisfaction were obtained across type of school and in the lowest parent satisfaction across student gender and type of school. Finally, the results indicated that the level of satisfaction for client (parents and students) was not significantly different; also the interaction effect between client variable and category of disability variable was not statistical significance.

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Kuwait has been making every possible effort to improve services for persons with special needs (Public Authority for Special Needs, 2011). In 2010, Kuwait issued the law of persons with disabilities care (Law No.8 for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) which respect the rights of the special needs persons to live a good life in order to be an effective member of the society (Public Authority for Special Needs, 2011).

However, since special needs provision in Kuwait is still new, there are many areas that still need a lot of attention. One such area is vocational rehabilitation for individuals with disabilities. There is currently a dearth of research in vocational rehabilitation in Kuwait and also in the Middle East. This Chapter provides a background on the need for research into this area, and also the aims and objectives of the research.

### **1.1 Background Knowledge**

The modern concept of rehabilitation is not only to help the individuals with disabilities to understand and accept their disability, but is a more comprehensive concept that focuses on other aspects such as medical, psychological, social, academic and professional community to develop rehabilitation skills (Khatib, 2010). The World Health Organization [WHO] (2010) defines rehabilitation as a process aimed at enabling

persons with disabilities to reach and maintain their optimal physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological and social functional levels, and to provide them with the tools they need to attain independence and self-determination. The definition by the International Labour Organization [ILO] (2008) refers to rehabilitation as a process which enables persons with disabilities to secure, retain and advance in suitable employment and thereby to further the person's integration or reintegration into society. Although the definitions vary in its terms but it coincide in its goal, which is a specialists' team effort aimed towards helping individuals with disabilities to achieve their potential and increase their confidence in life through the assessment of their abilities and through helping them to develop and benefit from these abilities as much as is possible (Jakobsson, Bergroth, Schuldt, & Ekholm, 2005).

Rehabilitation services consist of several types which include: community-based rehabilitation; medical rehabilitation; psychological rehabilitation; social rehabilitation; educational rehabilitation; and vocational rehabilitation (Khatib, 2010). The primary concern of this research is on vocational rehabilitation.

### **1.1.1 Vocational Rehabilitation**

Vocational rehabilitation is identified by the ILO in 1983 as a major component of rehabilitation services (Obeid, 2009). Vocational rehabilitation is considered to be a continuous and coordinated process which includes offering of vocational services such as vocational guidance, vocational training through workshops, enhancement of professional work environment to elevate the abilities of the person with a disability, and

therefore enable persons with disabilities to find suitable and continuous work (Obeid, 2009).

Vocational rehabilitation is defined by Homa (2004) as helping individuals with disabilities to reach a crucial decision related to his affairs, and in helping him to maximise his abilities and personal traits, which can be used to educate and train him for a job or career which will benefit him and the society. The services under vocational rehabilitation can include training, education, and provision of psychological, social and medical services. A person who is vocationally rehabilitated therefore will be able to maximize their ability to obtain jobs, live an independent life, adapt to society, and therefore, are considered to be less of a burden to the society as is often perceived. They can now become more effective persons in society after rehabilitation and training as they are now a part of the productive force.

Some studies indicated that if persons with disabilities are trained and rehabilitated in component areas, they will compensate the cost spent on them forty times (Zarei, 2006). This is a motivation for the researcher to conduct research to improve vocational rehabilitation services for persons with special needs in Kuwait.

### **1.1.2 The Vocational Rehabilitation Programs in Kuwait**

Most of the Arabic countries offer vocational rehabilitation programs for students with special needs and this includes Kuwait. These programs offer individualised educational plans and rehabilitation strategies which are derived from theoretical frameworks in the field of rehabilitation of students with special needs. These services are implemented through teamwork.



Vocational rehabilitation services for persons with physical, intellectual or multiple disabilities are offered in two specialized centers, fifteen private special schools, and five public special schools. The specialized centers provide for persons aged 18 years and above, whereas the schools serve students aged between 13 till 25 years old. From aged 3 years till 13, students are provided with special education services. This study focused on students with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities in both private and public schools. Students with visual or hearing impairment are not included in this study as they are in different programs (integrated programs) with different sets of needs. Students with severe visual or hearing impairment are enrolled in vocational rehabilitation centers, and not in schools.

The students with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities in schools receive their vocational rehabilitation services in vocational workshops and rehabilitation programs that cover multiple disciplines like psychological, social, academics and job training. The type of services received is based on the type and degree of disability, age, ability, gender, and occupation that is suitable for training. In these workshops they are trained in simple jobs like binding, printing, sewing, carpentry, flower arranging, making of gifts and perfumes etc.

Even though there are different types of schools (private or public), but the vocational rehabilitation team that provide vocational rehabilitation services for persons with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities in these schools are largely similar in terms of disciplines. They offer these services through a multi-disciplinary team that include the following: rehabilitation trainer, assistant rehabilitation trainer, psychologist, a social worker, speech and language specialist, physical therapist, occupational

therapist, nurse, supervisor, and a manager. The members in this team are collectively called vocational rehabilitation service providers.

### **1.1.3 Training Needs in Vocational Rehabilitation**

The traditional model of vocational rehabilitation services involves many human specialists and a rehabilitation service coordinator called a rehabilitation counselor (Saravanabhavan, 1991). The job of the rehabilitation counselor is multi-faceted and different competencies are required of them to function at different phases in their work. Competencies required of certified vocational rehabilitation counselors are comprehensive and in-depth, and knowledge in vocational rehabilitation encompasses many and vastly different knowledge areas such as assessment, career counseling, caseload management, health and medical services, employment strategies and laws (Leahy, Muenzen, Saunders, & Strauser, 2009). Therefore, training need is an important aspect of vocational rehabilitation.

Clearly, training needs of vocational rehabilitation providers is a major concern in vocational rehabilitation and has been addressed in previous studies (e.g. Berven, 1979; Chan, Leahy, Saunders, Tarvydas, Ferrin & Lee, 2003; Emener & Rubin, 1980; Froehlich & Linkowski, 2002; Harrison & Lee, 1979; Leahy, Chan, & Saunders, 2003; Leahy et al., 2009; Leahy, Shapson, & Wright, 1987; Leahy, Szymanski, & Linkowski, 1993; Matthews, Buys, Randall, Biggs & Hazelwood, 2010; Rubin, Matkin, Ashley, Beardsly, May, & Onstott, 1984). A measure of the vocational rehabilitation service providers' knowledge on vocational rehabilitation was focused on in this research.

#### **1.1.4 Client Satisfaction in Vocational Rehabilitation**

Vocational rehabilitation programs have been evaluated previously through assessment of client satisfaction (Capella & Turner, 2004; Hein, Lustig & Uruk, 2005). In this research, the researcher looked at client satisfaction more as a process, and therefore, determined it from multiple dimensions of satisfaction such as satisfaction on service providers, satisfaction on services provided, satisfaction on school, and overall satisfaction (Capella & Turner, 2004).

#### **1.2 Problem Statement**

The latest statistics in 2011 issued by the Public Authority for Special Needs determined that the number of person with disabilities in Kuwait has reached 33, 000 persons and the proportion of persons with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities is more than 60% of the total. Due to the large number, there is an urgent need to conduct research on vocational rehabilitation services for persons with physical, intellectual or multiple disabilities. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there has been no large-scaled empirically-based research so far in the field of vocational rehabilitation in Kuwait. The three studies conducted so far in Kuwait (Aldei, 2008; Kamal, 1993; Meshal, 2005) are small-scaled and sampled only the two vocational rehabilitation centers but not the schools. Vocational rehabilitation services in the schools have never been researched upon.

From the practical-based perspective, feedback from the Public Authority of Special Needs (2011) indicated that the number of persons with disabilities that has been vocationally rehabilitated is still very small. From 1960 till 1990, only 166 persons with

disabilities have been rehabilitated in the specialised centers (Kamal 1993). Currently, with the addition of vocational rehabilitation services in schools, the number receiving such services have increased, however according to the Kuwaiti authorities, those who have obtained jobs are still very few and far between. This feedback from the Public Authority for Special Needs (2011) is supported by field observations and informal interviews conducted with persons with disabilities and parents by the current researcher, who has been a technical supervisor of special education programs in Kuwait for four years, then as a manager of special education programs for three years. Therefore, there is a great need to improve on the vocational rehabilitation services in Kuwait in order to obtain better outcomes.

A major area that requires improvement is in the training of vocational rehabilitation service providers. This is because currently the multi-disciplinary team of service providers lack training in the field. Providers of allied health services such as psychologists, speech and language therapists would have received specialized training in their respective fields, however, currently, there are no data to show whether they possess the knowledge to take on the tasks traditionally performed by rehabilitative counselors. In addition, most of the other service providers such as managers, and social workers in the vocational rehabilitation team normally receive their training through in-service ad hoc programs rather than through a pre-service certified program (Kamal, 1993).

It is quite obvious that there is a lack of systematic training among the vocational service providers; however, no research has been conducted thus far to identify exactly which knowledge component they need training in (Meshal, 2005). Many knowledge

components have been identified to be required of rehabilitative counselors. For example, Leahy et al. (2003) identified six knowledge domains that are required of vocational rehabilitation counselors. They include (1) career counseling, assessment, and consultation; (2) counseling theories, techniques, and applications; (3) rehabilitation services and resources; (4) case and caseload management; (5) health care and disability systems; and (6) medical, functional, and environmental implications of disability. It is necessary to identify training needs as according to Rubin and Roesller (2001) vocational rehabilitation counselors are required to operate as very “sophisticated professionals” possessing multiple rehabilitation counselor knowledge and skills. Training needs of rehabilitation counselors has been the focus of many research studies on vocational rehabilitation as this is a relatively new discipline compared to other types of disciplines related to special needs (e.g. Froehlich & Linkowski, 2002; Chan et al., 2003), however this research area has not be addressed in Kuwait.

The lack of knowledge and training among vocational rehabilitation service providers have been shown to have impact on vocational outcomes of their clients. Previous researches have found that education and training have impact on service quality and vocational outcomes (e.g. Cook & Bolton, 1992; Wheaton & Berven, 1994), and this highlights another issue on vocational rehabilitation services in Kuwait, which is the issue of the lack of program evaluation especially in Kuwait schools.

Evaluation of vocational rehabilitation programs are important in order to improve on services, planning of programs and evaluating of rehabilitation counselors (Capella & Turner, 2004). In this regard, client satisfaction has been used as the focal point for assessing program effectiveness in vocational rehabilitation services (Hein,

Lustig & Uruk, 2005). Client satisfaction is able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of rehabilitation services (Koch & Merz, 1995). As this type of assessment has not yet been conducted before for vocational rehabilitation programs in Kuwait schools, it therefore necessitates that such evaluations be carried out.

In summary, training needs of service providers and client satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services are two of the major concerns in vocational rehabilitation but has not yet been adequately addressed in Kuwait. It is therefore necessary to look at inadequacies that might exist from these two perspectives. In addition, as larger-scale vocational rehabilitation research is new in Kuwait, therefore it is necessary that this research is exploratory. This suggests that the association of demographic variables such as gender, age, qualification and types of experiences to both training needs and client satisfaction are necessary to provide a better baseline of the current situation. Moreover, research into how these demographic characteristics affects training needs and client satisfaction in vocational rehabilitation studies in developed countries has been divergent (e.g. Chan et al., 2003; Froehlich & Linkowski, 2002; Matthews et al., 2010; Szymanski, Linkowski, Leahy, Diamond, & Thoreson, 1993). Therefore, there is a need to study the association of demographic characteristics in relation to the dependent variables of this study.

### **1.3 Purpose of Study**

As vocational rehabilitation counseling services are still new in Kuwait, it was critical to identify the training needs of vocational rehabilitation service providers in order to inform education curricula. It was also as important to identify client

satisfaction in order to inform on improvement of services. Client satisfaction was measured where possible from the perspectives of the students themselves and also from the parents' perspectives. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate and identify strengths and limitations of the vocational rehabilitation services in Kuwait from the perspectives of both the providers (training needs) and the clients (client satisfaction).

#### **1.4 Objectives of Study**

Based on the purpose above, the objectives of the research in relation to training needs are to:

1. Determine the psychometric characteristics of an adapted training needs inventory for the Kuwait context for service providers.
2. Explore demographic characteristics that are associated with training needs of the vocational rehabilitation service providers.
3. Identify whether there are any significant differences in training needs across demographic characteristics for service providers.
4. Identify the training needs of vocational rehabilitation service providers in Kuwaiti schools serving students with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities.
5. Identify the vocational rehabilitation counseling knowledge domains with the highest training need for service providers.

6. Identify the vocational rehabilitation counseling knowledge domains with the highest training need across different demographic characteristics for service providers.

Based on the purpose above, the objectives of the research in relation to client satisfaction are to:

7. Develop a client satisfaction survey and determine its psychometric characteristics for the Kuwait context.
8. Explore demographic characteristics that are associated with client satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services in these Kuwaiti schools.
9. Identify whether there are any significant differences in client satisfaction across demographic characteristics.
10. Identify client satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services in Kuwaiti schools serving students with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities.
11. Identify the client satisfaction dimension that has the lowest satisfaction.
12. Compare parent satisfaction and student satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services.



## **1.5 Research Questions**

In light of the research objectives on identifying training needs, the following research questions are determined:

For objective one, the research question is:

- (1) What are the psychometric characteristics of an adapted training needs inventory for the Kuwait context?

For objective two, the research question is:

- (2) Which demographic variables (gender, age, years of experience, qualification, job title, type of school) significantly predict the service providers' training needs?

For objective three, the research question is:

- (3) Are there any significant differences between the training needs of vocational rehabilitation service providers across: gender, age, years of experience, qualification, job title, type of school?

For objective four, the research question is:

- (4) What are the training needs of vocational rehabilitation service providers in Kuwaiti schools serving students with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities across: overall, gender, age, years of experience, qualification, job title, type of school?

For objective five, the research question is:

- (5) For which vocational rehabilitation counseling knowledge domains do the vocational rehabilitation service providers report the highest training needs?

For objective six, the research question is:

- (6) For which vocational rehabilitation counseling knowledge domains do the vocational rehabilitation service providers report the highest training needs across: gender, age, years of experience, qualification, job title, type of school?

In light of the research objectives identifying client satisfaction, the following research questions are determined:

For objective seven, the research question is:

- (7) What are the psychometric characteristics of the client satisfaction survey (Student Satisfaction Survey and Parent Satisfaction Survey) for the Kuwait context?

For objective eight, the research questions are:

- (8) Which demographic variables (gender, age, parent's qualification, parent's income per month, number of siblings, type of school, and category of disability) significantly predict students' satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services?
- (9) Which demographic variables (parent's gender, student's gender, parent's age, student's age, parent's qualification, parent's income per month, number of student's siblings, type of school, and category of their son/daughter's disability) significantly predict parents' satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services?

For objective nine, the research questions are:

- (10) Are there any significant differences between students' satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services which are offered to them across: gender, age, parent's qualification, parent's income per month, number of siblings, type of school, and category of disability?
- (11) Are there any significant differences between parents' satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services which are offered to their children across: parent's gender, student's gender, parent's age, student's age, parent's qualification, parent's income per month, number of student's siblings, type of school, and category of their son/daughter's disability?

For objective 10, the research questions are:

- (12) What is the students' satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services overall, and across: gender, age, parent's qualification, parent's income per month, number of siblings, type of school, and category of disability?
- (13) What is the parents' satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services which are offered to their children overall, and across: parent's gender, student's gender, parent's age, student's age, parent's qualification, parent's income per month, number of student's siblings, type of school, and category of their son/daughter's disability?

For objective 11, the research questions are:

(14) For which satisfaction dimensions do the students report the lowest satisfaction overall, and across: gender, age, parent's qualification, parent's income per month, number of siblings, type of school, and category of disability?

(15) For which satisfaction dimensions do the parents report the lowest satisfaction overall, and across: parent's gender, student's gender, parent's age, student's age, parent's qualification, parent's income per month, number of student's siblings, type of school, and category of their son/daughter's disability?

For objective 12, the research question is:

(16) Do students and parents of different category of disabilities share similar assessment of satisfaction about the vocational rehabilitation services which are offered to them?

## 1.6 Conceptual Framework of Study

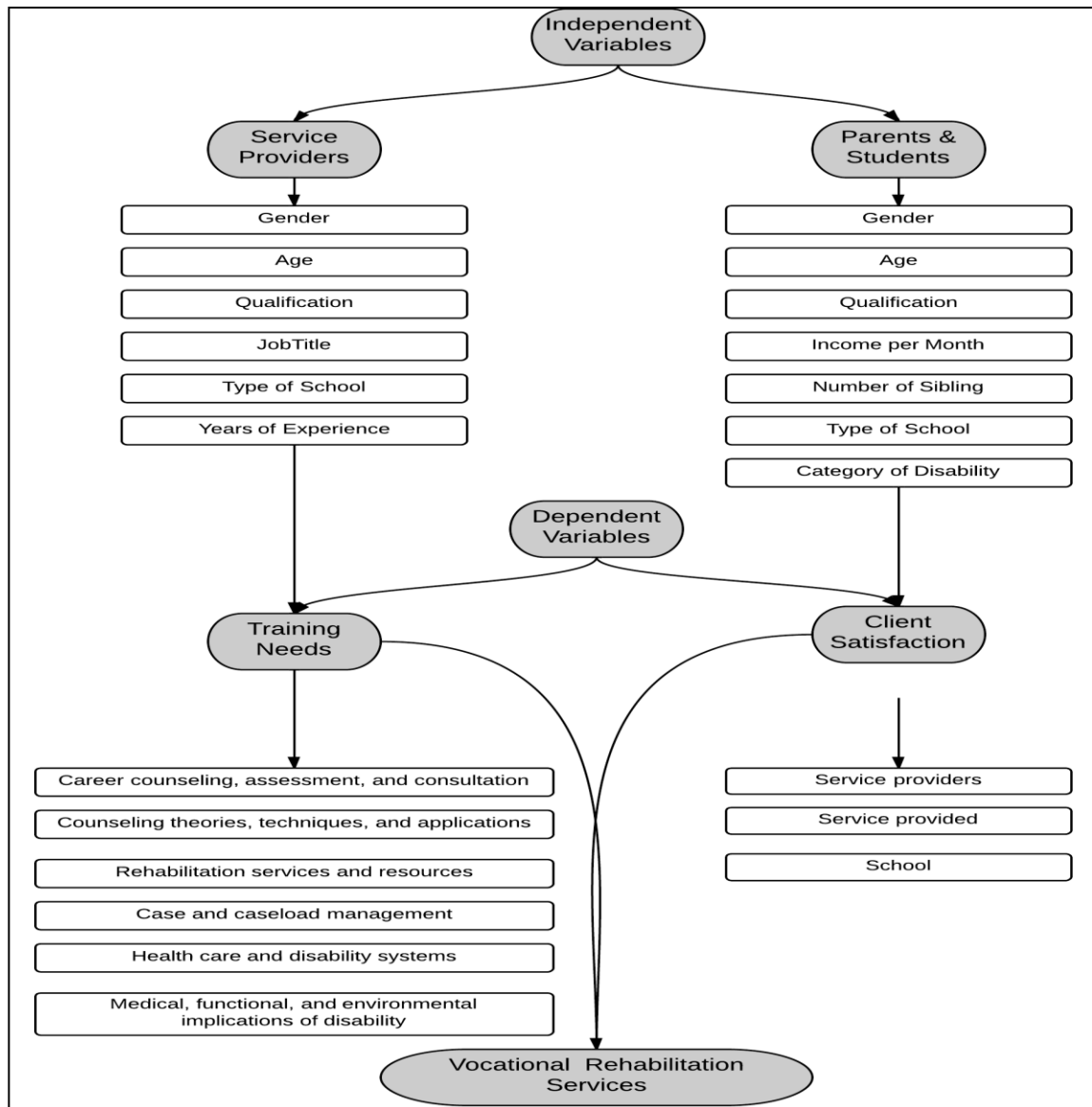


Figure 1.1. Conceptual framework of study.

There are two dependent variables in this research, which are training needs and client satisfaction (refer to Figure 1.1).

### **1.6.1 Training needs**

This study attempted to determine the training needs of vocational rehabilitation service providers in terms of knowledge domains on vocational rehabilitation as defined by Leahy et al. (2003). According to Leahy et al. (2003), there are six dimensions in vocational rehabilitation counseling knowledge, which are (1) career counseling, assessment, and consultation; (2) counseling theories, techniques, and applications; (3) rehabilitation services and resources; (4) case and caseload management; (5) health care and disability systems, and (6) medical, functional, and environmental implications of disability.

Training needs were calculated based on the discrepancy between perceived importance and perceived preparedness in the knowledge areas. In other words, if the service providers pointed to high importance of a particular area, but at the same time indicate little preparedness for it, therefore it means that there is a need for training in this area. However, if the participant pointed to high importance and also high preparedness in a particular knowledge area, this means that there is no need for training in that particular area.

In this study, the researcher identified several independent variables (gender, age, years of experience, qualification, job title, and type of school) to study their influence on the training needs of the providers of vocational rehabilitation services. The levels of the independent variables for training needs are: gender (male, female); age (22-32, 33-38, 39-54); qualification (bachelor [B.A], B.A and professional diploma, MA or PhD, others); job title (manager, supervisor, rehabilitation trainer, assistant rehabilitation

trainer, psychologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech and language specialist, a nurse); type of school (private, public), and years of experience (4 or less, 5-6, 7 and above).

### **1.6.2 Client satisfaction**

This study attempted to determine client satisfaction of both parents and students with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities in schools. In this research, client satisfaction was determined by a multi-dimensional model. According to Capella and Turner (2004), client satisfaction should include three dimensions which are (1) counselor; (2) services; and (3) agency. As this research addressed vocational rehabilitation services in schools that provide services based on a multidisciplinary team, dimensions of satisfaction was developed as follows: (1) service providers; (2) services; (3) school. The researcher identified several independent variables that are believed to have an impact on the level of satisfaction with the clients which are as follows: gender, age, qualification, income per month, number of sibling, type of school, and category of disability. These variables have been addressed in previous studies in other countries and they are gender, qualifications, type of school and category of disability (e.g. Bashiti & Abdats, 2004; Capella & Turner, 2004; Iouye, 2000; Kosciulek, 2003; Mounzer, 2007; Tucker, Abrams, Chennault, Stanger, & Herman, 1997).

### **1.7 The Importance of the Study**

The importance of this study is that it focuses on vocational rehabilitation services provided in public and private schools, which to the researcher's knowledge has not been addressed before. There are no studies in the Arab countries in general or in

Kuwait in particular on this topic. The results therefore added to the body of knowledge on vocational rehabilitation by providing empirical evidence from the Kuwait perspective. This study also contributed to fulfill the shortage of literature in Arabic in the field of rehabilitation of persons with disabilities. Currently, there are a lack of studies and researches in this area.

The study was significant as it highlighted the training needs of vocational rehabilitation services providers for individuals with disabilities. The shortcomings of service providers in these programs are revealed in order to improve on education curricula, training and services. The study was also significant as it highlighted the client satisfaction of vocational rehabilitation services from the perspective of both parents and students. The weaknesses revealed by them will help to improve on provision of services.

This study also adapted an established instrument on knowledge of vocational rehabilitation into Arabic language and also Arabic culture and context, with permission obtained from the original author. Another instrument on client satisfaction was also developed. The psychometric characteristics of the instruments were investigated in this study and were reported. Even though validation is done only for Kuwait, however, the similarity of language and culture across the Arab region lends credence to the generalisability of the instruments across the Arab-speaking region. It is important to have validated instruments in vocational rehabilitation suitable for the Arabic language and culture as this will help to expand and encourage empirical research in this area from this particular part of the world. Currently, most research on vocational rehabilitation is predominantly only from the United States (U.S.).



The results will also be beneficial for those responsible for the planning and development of vocational rehabilitation programs for persons with disabilities. It will provide them with data to clarify the vulnerabilities in these programs in order to improve on them, so that eventually the desired goals of vocational rehabilitation are achieved. In addition, this study proposed ways to improve the rehabilitation services for persons with special based on a scientific basis.

In summary, the identified strengths and limitations of vocational rehabilitation services through analysis of training needs of service providers and through analysis on client satisfaction of current program, especially from the contributions of different demographic characteristics will have implications for vocational rehabilitation practice, pre-service preparation and professional development.

### **1.8 Limitation of the Study**

The primary research methodology in this study is survey. Even though the researcher endeavoured to obtain a high return of the survey questions distributed, the final returns were not 100%. This includes survey questions distributed to vocational rehabilitation providers, students, and parents. Also this study focused on only students with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities who received vocational rehabilitation services in Kuwaiti schools, because different programs are offered to students with hearing and visual impairment.

## **1.9 Operational Definitions**

### **Vocational rehabilitation**

International Labour Organization (ILO) definition: The term vocational rehabilitation of persons with special needs is defined as a phase in the coordinated and continuous process of social rehabilitation whose aim is to avoid or minimize the functional, psychological, physical, economic or socio-cultural effects of disabilities of different types and origins, and coordinated and combined use of social, educational, medical, and vocational measures for training or retraining the person to the highest possible level of functional ability to enable persons with disabilities to obtain and retain suitable employment. The promotion of integration of the person with disabilities into the community is emphasized (ILO, 2008). The ILO definition is the adopted vocational rehabilitation definition for Kuwait.

In this study vocational rehabilitation is operationalized as:

All rehabilitation services provided by an integrated work team in Kuwaiti schools for persons with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities. These include all the assistance, the arrangements and procedures provided by the schools in the educational aspects, counseling and health, diagnostic, training and transition, and various support services. It also includes services provided to the students or the parents.

### **Vocational rehabilitation counseling knowledge domains**

Six domains of knowledge have been determined by Leahy et al. (2003) to identify training needs, which are as follows: (1) career counseling, assessment, and

consultation; (2) counseling theories, techniques, and applications; (3) rehabilitation services and resources; (4) case and caseload management; (5) health care and disability systems; and (6) medical, functional, and environmental implications of disability.

In this study it is operationalized as:

The six domains of knowledge as defined by Leahy et al. (2003) that are supposed to be acquired by the rehabilitation services providers in Kuwait, whether acquired before (pre-service) or during the service. These knowledge domains are in the survey questionnaire used for the study (refer to Chapter Two page [55-58] for in-depth explanation of the six knowledge domains).

### **Training needs**

The knowledge areas that are reported to be important but are limited or insufficient in preparation would be the knowledge areas that require training needs (Leahy et al., 2009; Leahy et al., 2003). Training needs are identified through measuring the discrepancy between perceived importance and perceived preparedness of knowledge domains in vocational rehabilitation counseling (Chan et al., 2003; Leahy et al., 1993).

In this study it is operationalized as:

The discrepancy between a measure on perceived importance and perceived preparedness of knowledge domains in vocational rehabilitation counseling as identified in the survey questionnaire on knowledge domains. If the service providers pointed to high importance of item, and a little preparedness, that means there is a need for training

in this area. In other words, the theoretical body of knowledge on vocational rehabilitation domains which are estimated to be low on a scale of acquisition and estimated to be high on the scale of importance will constitute training needs.

### **Vocational rehabilitation counselors**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defined vocational rehabilitation counselors as personnel that help persons with intellectual, physical, or emotional disabilities -as determined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and then the 1998 Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act- deals with the social, personal, and vocational effects of disabilities. The personnel is able to provide vocational and personal counseling, determine the strengths and limitations of persons with disabilities, and offer case management support by interviewing both persons with disabilities and their parents. Rehabilitation counselors also evaluate school and medical reports, arrange for medical care, vocational training, and job placement, and consult with psychologists, physicians, employers, and speech, physical, and occupational therapists to determine the skills and capabilities of the persons with disabilities. Rehabilitation counselors develop vocational rehabilitation programs of persons with disabilities by conferring with the client. These programs include training for persons with disabilities to develop their job skills to be employed, and to integrate them into society. Rehabilitation counselors are competent to recognize and to help lessen attitudinal and environmental barriers. Such help may include providing education, and advocacy services to persons with disabilities and their families, employers, and others in the community. Rehabilitation counselor facilitates and coordinates with other service providers to

increase the person's competence to live independently (United State Department of Labor, 2010).

### **Vocational rehabilitation service providers**

Providers in this study are:

Team members who provide vocational rehabilitation services for persons with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities within the schools in Kuwait, which includes public and private schools. These include manager, supervisor, rehabilitation trainer, assistant rehabilitation trainer, psychologist, social worker, occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech and language specialist, and a nurse, who answered the study instrument for the identification of training needs. These team members are supposed to have the skills of vocational rehabilitation counselors as described above.

### **Clients**

Clients in this study are:

Students with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities who are receiving the vocational rehabilitation services within the schools of Kuwait. These students are aged between 13 to 25 years old. Clients also include parents of students with physical, intellectual, or multiple disabilities who are receiving the vocational rehabilitation services within the schools of Kuwait.